TAFT TALK

No. 76 *Newsletter of the Taft Family Association* **Jun 2019**

Friends Meeting House, Uxbridge, MA Photo from familypedia.wikia.org

Uxbridge has much of historical significance for the Taft family of course. But did you know there is a connection with the Underground Railroad?

The Quaker Meeting house at Uxbridge, MA became known for its ardent antislavery advocates Effingham Capron and Abby Kelley Foster (who encouraged Susan B. Anthony to join cause). Under their leadership "Uxbridge became a key junction in the Underground railroad and the early efforts to free African American slavery. Under Effingham's leadership, the Uxbridge anti-slavery society grew to over 450 members as he rose to be the state and national Vice President of the anti-slavery societies."

For more information on the role of Uxbridge, Abby Kelley Foster and Taft family members, see pages 2, 3, and 4 of this issue.

Source: upclosed.com

Calling all ancestors of Alanson Taft (1817-1907):

Nick and Kathy Lester of WI sent us information that the Tafts buried in the Haney Ridge Cemetery are all descended from Alanson Taft (1817-1907). There are a large number of their family members buried there. They know where Alanson's farm was and how long it stayed in the family.

Anyone who wants more information should email them at kcnl@merr.com

Alanson Taft was the son of Benjamin (although proof has been elusive, many believe Benjamin to be Benjamin E. Taft born in 1794 in Taftsville, VT son of Benjamin (Seth, Stephen, Benjamin, Robert) Taft. Thank you, Nick and Kathy, for your generosity of spirit.

Chuck Westin writes about his collection of William Howard Taft (WHT) artifacts:

Over the years Chuck has accumulated a number of WHT autographs and related memorabilia and has recently sold some (including donating over two dozen related books to the WHT Historic Site in Cincinnati). He said he would like to sell any of the remaining autographs / items to an interested Taft relative. Anyone interested can email: ccwestin@nckcn.com for a free listing of the autographs / items.

He also commiserated with us on the problems of aging organizations. In 1994 he took the secretary position of his high school alumni association "until the next election." "Like the imaginary 'Procrastinators Club', they haven't had any elections since then and the officers have all 'aged out' – so like us, it is a worthwhile historic organization that he will keep doing for at least a few more years, but it would be great to have some officers!"

Uxbridge, MA and the anti-slavery movement

Uxbridge, originally a Nipmuc village called "Wacentug" (river bend) was settled in 1662 and named for the Earl of Uxbridge. The town, (population 13,457), is located 40 mi southwest of Boston. It has numerous historic sites (many of course involving our Taft family) and is the midpoint of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, a particularly scenic and historic area well-known for its textile mills as well as the Blackstone Canal which carried freight and merchandise south to Rhode Island.

The third US woolen mill began there in 1809. In 1820 the Capron Mill, built by John Capron and his sons Effingham and John, "manufactured the first satinets, used the first power looms for woolens in America, and made US military uniforms for over 140 years, including the first US Air Force dress uniform, 'Uxbridge 1683', aka Uxbridge Blue."

Uxbridge also has a strong liberal social legacy. "It was the first town to grant town meeting rights to America's first woman voter, Lydia Chapin Taft, and approved Massachusetts's first women jurors in 1922. Effingham Capron and fellow Quakers led anti-slavery work providing a junction on the Underground Railroad. A local Quaker, Abby Kelley Foster, led Susan B. Anthony, and Lucy Stone into the abolition movement."

Among the sites of significance in Uxbridge is the "Friends Meetinghouse, whose members included prominent abolitionists Abby Kelley Foster and Effingham Capron. Effingham Capron led the 450 member local anti-slavery society. Brister Pierce, purportedly formerly a slave in Uxbridge, was one of 132 men to sign the 1835 antislavery petition presented to the US House of Representatives demanding the abolition of slavery and the slave trade in the District of Columbia."

For more on the Taft Family see pp 3 and 4

Source: familypedia.wikia.org

A look at a relatively little known fact of Uxbridge and the Taft family

Roy Henry updated us with his latest project on Uxbridge history. Roy and two others are working on the history pertaining to the anti-slavery abolitionist movement and the Underground Railroad. Roy and his partners have compiled a long list of Uxbridge residents who took part in the abolition and the Underground Railroad movement in Uxbridge. He enclosed a copy of the research papers in which the Taft family took part. Roy also notes he hopes this topic won't cause discomfort or misgivings.

Roy says Effingham Capron (1791-1859) of the prominent Capron family played an important role in the Underground Railroad in Uxbridge. "In 1833 Capron was going to conventions down south and also in NY, meeting with noted people Frederick Douglas, William Lloyd Garrison, Harriet Tubman, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Stanton and Abby Kelley Foster. In 1834 he was made conductor of the Underground Railroad setting up trips for slaves to travel north. His home near the Uxbridge common was an underground stop. Meetings were being held in Uxbridge around the 1840s at the Baptist Church and also the Unitarian Church with some of the same notable people.

A sampling of some of the people who donated (from various editions of the "Liberator" included:

"A Little Boy" donated 6c in Sep 1839

"Two Little Girls" made pine holiday decorations for Fanueil Hall's Anti-Slavery Bazaar in Dec 1848

Susan: a young fugitive slave was living in Uxbridge and worked as a domestic servant

Nancy Adams: a fugitive slave lived openly in Uxbridge, donated 25c and baked a cake for William Lloyd Garrison in 1846

And the Tafts who were involved included:

- Dr Augustine Calvin Taft b 1817 s/o Chandler and Abigail (Taft) Taft m Deborah Taylor 1839
- Charles Augustus Taft b 1825 s/o Timothy and Polly (Marsh) Taft
- Frederic Taft b 1759 s/o Samuel and Mary (Murdock) Taft
- Mary Taft
- Samuel Taft
  could be Samuel b 1790 s/o Moses; J Line
  could be Samuel b 1822 s/o Warner R line

See Tafts and the Anti-Slavery Abolitionist Movement p 4

Capron Park dedicated in 2012 to the memory of Effingham Capron because of his work on behalf of the anti-slavery and Underground Railroad movement.

source: upclosed.com

Andrew Taft of Mendon, NY and San Francisco, CA and his children

Norma Winters wrote that she was having difficulty determining how many children Andrew and Anna / Annette M. (Flanagan) Taft actually had since there seemed to be disagreement among the sources. TTT #50 printed the obituary for Andrew Taft (1828-1913), brewer, born in Mendon, NY son of Adon and Hannah (Wood) Taft, and an old-time resident of San Francisco, which included their children Ada H., Adon A., John G., and Henry J. Taft. To this list should be added Edwin W. and Viletta A. Taft. Andrew's children were born in Mokelumne Hill, Calaveras, CA. On Andrew's gravestone are listed: Anna Taft (1837-1915) V.A. (1872-1876), E. W. (1875-1876), A.A. (1865-1908), A. (Andrew) (1828-1913) and Ada Taft Allen (1861-1956). The confusion probably stems from burial records which show Violetta A., Edwin H. and Mine, all children of Neal C. and Matte Marie (Sorensen) Taft who died between 1885 and 1881 and were also buried in Greenlawn Memorial Park, Colma, San Mateo, CA, having been reburied from San Francisco, CA.

Andrew Taft was the son of Adon (Caleb, Caleb, Daniel, Robert) Taft.

Tafts and the Anti-Slavery Abolitionist Movement

The Taft individuals Roy Henry and his committee have uncovered included the following:

Dr. Augustine Calvin Taft, born 11 May 1817 in Uxbridge, son of Chandler and Abigail "Nabby" (Taft) Taft (VR 149), died 17 Feb 1857 in Framingham, Mass., buried in Prospect Hill Cemetery. He married Deborah M. Taylor on 29 Sep 1839 in Uxbridge (VR 313 int).
Lineage: Chandler, Calvin, Gershom, Peter, Joseph, Robert Taft.
Career: graduate of Harvard Medical School; practiced medicine in Worcester Co.

- Withdrew from the Congregational Church in 1845 owing to its position on slavery and colonization. *(Liberator: 20 Feb 1857, Issue B, p 30)*
- Elected Chairman of the Uxbridge Anti-Slavery Society in a convention held 10 and 11 Aug 1850 in the Uxbridge Unitarian Church. *(Liberator:16 Aug 1850)*
- Served as General Agent of the Boston Society for Aiding Discharged Convicts and cared for many of them in his own home aided by his wife. *(Liberator: 20 Feb 1857, Issue B, p 30)*
- A "Tribute of Respect" from the Society for Aiding Discharged Convicts was published in the Liberator *(Liberator: 6 Mar 1857, p 39)*

Charles Augustus Taft, born 12 Nov 1825 in Uxbridge, son of Timothy and Polly (Marsh) Taft (VR 1.150), died 31 Mar 1904 in Uxbridge (MAVR 93.207), buried Prospect Hill Cemetery. He married (1) 15 Sep 1847 in Worcester, MA Sarah Elizabeth Bowen (MAVR 31.255); married (2) 21 Jun 1857 in Blackstone, MA Elizabeth Southwick (MAVR 110.158).
Lineage: Timothy, David, Noah, Joseph, Thomas, Robert Taft.
Career: Teacher and tinsmith; First treasurer of the Uxbridge Savings Bank; appointed Postmaster by Pres. Lincoln which office he filled for 24 years; served one term in the state legislature.

- Elected Secretary of the Uxbridge Anti-Slavery Society in a convention held 10 and 11 Aug 1850 in the Uxbridge Unitarian Church. *(Liberator:16 Aug 1850, n.p., and 6 Sep 1850, p 160)*

Frederic Taft, born 19 Jun 1759 in Uxbridge, son of Samuel and Mary (Murdock) Taft (VR 153), died 10 Feb 1846 in Uxbridge (MAVR 21.170), buried Prospect Hill Cemetery. He married 20 Jun 1782 in Upton, Mass Abigail Wood (VR 134, 147).
Lineage: Samuel, Israel, Robert, Robert) Taft.
Career: Surveyor, Justice of the Peace over 20 years, Town Clerk for 30 years, operated large farm. His father owned the Taft Tavern where George Washington stayed.

- Called to attend a convention of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society convened in Boston on 24 May 1836. *(Liberator:14 May 1836, front page)*

Mary Taft is of uncertain ancestry at present. She could have been any of a number of Mary Tafts, of various ages.

- Donated .50c to the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society in September 1839. *(Liberator: 25 Oct 1839, p 171)*

Samuel Taft is probably one of two Samuel Tafts who lived and died in Uxbridge, MA and more likely the second:

a. Samuel Taft b 24 Sep 1790 Uxbridge, son of Moses and Judith (Cummings) Taft (VR 161), died 11 Oct 1863 in Uxbridge (MAVR 167.289). He married 16 Dec 1824 in Auburn, MA Dorcas Keith (VR 83, 72).
Lineage: Moses, Abner, Moses, Joseph, Robert Taft
Career: Farmer.

b. Samuel Taft b 23 Jan 1822 Uxbridge, MA, son of Warner and Mary (Taft) Taft (VR 161), died 7 Jan 1894 in Uxbridge, (MAVR 447.719), buried in Prospect Hill Cemetery. He married 10 Apr 1844 in Uxbridge, Charlotte Elizabeth Taft (VR 314, MAVR 7.156).
Lineage: Warner, Samuel, Israel, Robert, Robert Taft
Career: miller, bonnet bleacher, trader.

- Elected to the Finance Committee of the Uxbridge Anti-Slavery Committee in a convention held 10 and 11 Aug 1850 in the Uxbridge Unitarian Church. *(Liberator: 16 Aug 1850, n.p., and 6 Sep1850, p 143)*

Abigail "Abby" Kelley Foster

Although not as famous as the other people mentioned by Roy Henry, Abigail "Abby" Kelley Foster was well-known as an American feminist, abolitionist and "lecturer who is remembered as an impassioned speaker for radical reform."

Abby Kelley Foster was born in 1811 in Pelham, MA and died in 1887 in Worcester, MA. Abby attended Quaker schools and later taught in a Quaker school in Lynn, MA. From 1835-1837 she was secretary of the Lynn Female Anti-Slavery Society. In 1838 she joined William Lloyd Garrison in founding the New England Non-Resistant Society and took part in the first two women's national antislavery conventions in NY City in 1837 and Philadelphia in 1838, where she made her first address which was "a stirring speech that prompted abolitionist leaders to urge her to take to the platform regularly. She acceded to the idea, resigned her teaching job, and in May 1839 began a career as a reform lecturer. That career was a stormy one, bringing vituperation and sometimes even mob violence upon her as she was denounced regularly from the pulpit as immoral for daring to mount the public platform."

At the convention in 1840, her "appointment to the business committee was the occasion for a split in the ranks of the delegates... leaving her ally Garrison in complete control of his own organization. Her almost ceaseless lecturing took her as far west as IN and MI, and her travels were marked not only by personal abuse but also, more immediately, by frequent hardship. In 1845 she married Stephen S. Foster, a companion on the abolitionist lecture circuit. They continued to travel and lecture together until 1861, although after 1847 Abigail Foster spent much of each year at their Worcester, MA farm. During the 1850s she added appeals for temperance and women's rights to her addresses."

"Foster's zeal and radicalism—she was outspokenly anticlerical and antigovernment almost to the point of anarchism—stirred opposition even, occasionally, among sympathizers, and in the late 1850s she broke with Garrison. After the Civil War ill health limited her activities. She made a fund-raising tour of New England on behalf of the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1870. On three occasions in the 1870s she and her husband refused to pay taxes on their farm on the grounds that she had been taxed without representation, being denied the vote. On each occasion the farm was bought by friends at public auction and returned to them."

Source: www.britannica.com

A young child and his father mourned in Oklahoma

Becky Grothe sent us obituary items from the "Gate Valley Star" (GVS), Gate, Beaver, OK for Harry Wilbur Taft. The first announcement of the very sad news was on 6 Jan 1921 when the article read: "Harry Taft, son of Mr. and Mrs. H. M. Taft, is quite sick with blood poisoning [a bacterial infection, septicemia]." Unfortunately Harry Wilbur Taft did not survive and his obituary notice followed on 17 Mar 1921 stating:

> "Harry Wilbur Taft, youngest son of Lillie Orilla and Harry Mortimer Taft, was born at Gate July 12, 1913, - after a short illness he departed this life Friday, March 11, 1921, being 7 years, 7 months, 29 days old, in the home where he was born. Besides a father and mother, he leaves behind to mourn, two sisters, Agnes B. Pounds, and Mrs. Toula Smith, of Havana, KS, and a brother, Joe E. Pounds, of Two Buttes, CO. Harry was a most lovable and beautiful boy and he leaves to mourn a host of friends who will miss his sunshiny life. His schoolmates attended the funeral services in a body."

Only five years later, Harry Mortimer Taft died and his obituary notice in the "Harper Co. Journal", Buffalo, OK followed on 18 Feb 1926 stating:

> "Early Settler Passed Away
> Harry Mortimer Taft was born 22 Mar 1867 in Hannibal, Marion, MO, and died 15 Feb 1926, aged 58/10/23. He came with his parents to Hutchinson, KS, aged nine years, thence to Harper Co., OK in 1902, settling on a farm four miles north of Rosston. He married 5 Jun 1912 Mrs. Lillie Pounds of Gate,. To this union was born one child, Harry Wilbur, who preceded him to his heavenly home at seven years of age. Mr. Taft joined the Methodist Church at Gate on 20 Mar 1921, "living a consistent Christian life until he was called higher. He was a devoted son, husband and father, a good neighbor, ever ready to lend a helping hand, and was respected by all who knew him. Since the time of his marriage, Mr. Taft lived on a farm two miles north of Gate, until within the last year when he came to his mother's home in Rosston. He leaves his wife, his mother, Mrs. Ruth Taft; two sisters, Mrs. O. D. Smith and Mrs. John Lake, and one brother, Oscar Taft, all of Rosston. Also three step-children, Mrs. Tola Smith, Havana, KS., Joe E. Pounds of Springville, CA, and Mrs. George Crider of Shamrock, TX. His father, C.W. Taft, one sister, Mrs. Callie L. Strong, and one brother, Geo. B. Taft, preceded him to the beyond."

Harry Wilbur Taft was the son of Harry Mortimer (George W., perhaps s/o Perry, perhaps s/o William, Paul, Benjamin, Robert) Taft.

In Memoriam

Joseph Laurence "Larry' Champaign

Marsden E. Champaign sent a note to us that his oldest brother passed away 14 Jun 2018 in Spanish Fort, AL. Our sincere condolences to Marsden and his family on their loss.

"A World War II veteran, Joseph Laurence "Larry" Champaign, age 98, passed away peacefully in his sleep on 14 Jun 2018, at Westminster Village in Spanish Fort, AL. He was born on 25 Feb 1920, in Wellsboro, PA, the first of seven sons born to Joseph Ismael and Neva Belle (King) Champaign. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps from 29 Aug 1942 to 13 Dec 1945. His civilian career was spent as an accountant with GAF Building Materials. He later worked for Securitas and retired at the age of 90. He was preceded in death by his parents, his wife, Barbara Wilson Champaign; and his brothers, Gary and Hugh Champaign. He is survived by his brothers, Marsden (Bobbie), Hilton (Jean), Darold (Nancy), and Terrence (Rosella); children, Joseph Jr. (Pam) and Neva Renee Blackmon (Lance); his stepchildren, Mike Dickinson, Rhonda Roebuck, and Traci Walter (Andy), four grandchildren, four step grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, two step great-grandchildren, numerous other relatives; and his beloved dog, Patches. A memorial service was held at Kingswood United Methodist Church in Mobile, AL."

Joseph Laurence "Larry" Champaign was the son of Neva King Champaign (Ural Oscar King, Prince William King Jr and Polly Ann Bancroft, Asa Bancroft and Anna Taft, Jesse (Mijamin, Nathan, Mijamin, Benjamin, Robert) Taft.

Source: www.dailyprogress.com

Barbara Lee (Wilson) Dickinson Champaign

Barbara Lee Wilson was born 7 Sep 1934 in Savannah, Chatham, GA, daughter of Irene Wilson, and died 30 Nov 2015 in Mobile, Mobile, AL, after a long battle with breast cancer. She grew up in St. Augustine, FL with her mother Irene and step-father Everette Wilson and brother Lamar.

Barbara Lee Wilson married first Randall Earl Dickinson (1934-2008) and had three children, Michael Dickinson, Rhonda Roebuck, and Traci(Andy) Walter; four grand-children, John (Tiffany) and James Dickinson, Dustin and Kristen Gabel; also two great grandchildren, Hunter and Liam Dickinson. She married second Joseph "Larry" Champaign and they were married for 31 happy years. Two step grandchildren and 6 step great-grandchildren were a part of this union.

"Barbara and Larry were very active in the volunteer community of Mobile for many years mainly through RSVP, the Saenger Theater being their favorite spot to volunteer. They served several entities for more than twenty years working as a team and spent many happy hours with these venues. She was a member of Kingswood United Methodist Church and the Opportunity Sunday School class for over 30 years. Barbara donated her body to medical science research."

Photo from findagrave.com

Source: Mobile Register and Baldwin County from Dec. 2 to Dec. 4, 2015; Findagrave

Please Note :

It's is time to begin preparing our files for internet access. If you have relevant experience and/or enthusiasm to bring to the project, please let me know. Thanks, Pat at patmarkallen@gmail.com.

Chuck Taft also wrote

"One of his mother's uncles, a Melville D. Taft (born in 1854 and died in 1932 in Toledo, OH) received a formal invitation from "Cousin Willy" (William Howard Taft) to the President's 4 Mar 1909 inauguration. However, since it appears that Mel was in the "Matthew (the immigrant) line" and therefore not related to the President, maybe any well to do person named Taft received an invitation – who knows?

Melville D. "Mel" Taft was born 28 Jul 1854 (according to 1900 census) or 1855 (according to FAG) probably in Ripton, Huron, OH, son of Rev. Austin and Catherine Rigsdon (Stratton) Taft, and died 26 May 1932 in Toledo, Lucas, OH (OHVR). He was buried in Woodlawn Cemetery, Toledo, OH (FAG). He married about 1885 in OH Cora A. Spitler. Cora A. Spitler was born 25 Jan 1867 in OH and died 9 Aug 1948 in Toledo, OH. She was buried in Woodlawn Cemetery, Toledo, OH (FAG). They had one child, Leona Taft who married James Moore Eckels in 1912 in OH.

Melville Dubois Taft (FAG)

In the 1870 census for Washington, Wood, OH Melville Taft was in his father's family and in the 1880 census for Bowling Green, Wood, OH with his parents, as single and a huckster. In the 1900 census for Lucas, OH he, his wife, daughter, and mother were listed, he as a traveling salesman. In 1910 he was living in Lucas with his family and called "a promotor of all kinds." In 1920 Melville was listed as a real estate agent with his wife, and daughter and her family, James. M. and James T. In the 1930 census they were all listed as well as a servant.

So looking at the census for 1910, Mel was called a "promotor of all kinds" – that must be a good thing. Since he was a real estate agent after that, and had a servant in the house, he probably had done quite well in his "careers."

Rev. Austin Taft was born 26 May 1806 in Worcester, MA, son of John / Jonathan and Abigail (Nelson) Taft, and died 12 Jan 1888 in Bowling Green, Wood, OH. He was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery, Bowling Green, OH (FAG). He married (1) 9 Feb 1831 in Steuben Co., NY "Sally" Benedict. Sally Benedict was born about 1808 in NY, daughter of Andrew Benedict, and died 27 Jul 1850 in Ripley, Huron, OH. She was buried in the Barre Farm Cemetery, Greenwich, OH (FAG). They had the following children: Helen Dorlisca, Andrew B., Ferdinando Cortes / Curtis, Austin S. P., and Rothilda L. Taft. Rev. Austin Taft married (2) 26 Dec 1850 in Huron, OH Catherine Rigsdon Stratton.Catherine Rigsdon Stratton was born 25 May 1819 in Beaver Co., PA, daughter of Daniel and Rachel (Logan) Stratton, and died 12 Jan 1909 in Toledo, OH. She was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery, Bowling Green, OH (FAG). They had the following children: Emma and Melville Dubois "Mel" Taft.

Cora A (Spitler) Taft (FAG)

Austin Taft states that he was born in MA and removed to VT with his parents when he was a young child, although the vital record for his birth hasn't been found yet. The family then moved to Steuben, NY when he was aged 15. He then moved to Huron, OH where he was introduced to the Methodist Society. His parents had been strong Presbyterians and called the Methodists witches – "full of wild fire and very dangerous to hear them preach." However on an evening in Feb 1838 he became overwhelmed and converted to that faith, recognizing that he needed to preach the gospel. His parents also converted. His home was a welcome stop for Prohibitiionists and he was the first man to vote for the abolition of slavery in the township.

Austin Taft was the son of John / Jonathan, John, Matthew) Taft.

In Memoriam

Victoria "Vicki" Taft

Vicki Taft's daughter Christina was exceptionally close to her mother and has suffered great emotional distress from the horrendous Paradise fire that took the life of her mother. She was unable to convince her mother to evacuate, as were so many others who couldn't understand the rapidity with which the firestorm grew and devoured everything in its path. We cannot begin to grasp the full immensity of your loss, Christina and our hearts go out to you. It will take a long time to come to peace with your trauma; but with the dedication and strength you have shown, we know you will survive and prosper. Your tributes to your mother in her Celebration of Life on 12 Jan 2019 at East Lawn Memorial Park reflect the great love you had for each other.

Victoria "Vicki" Taft was born 11 Nov 1951 in Norristown, PA, the daughter of Donald Laurence and Marian Bradford (Taft) DeBaun, and died 8 Nov 2018 in Paradise, Butte, CA. She married James Conner.

"Vicki spent the majority of her life in Los Angeles and grew up in the world of the film industry. She often visited her father, a cameraman, on sets for Paramount Pictures, Columbia Studios, MGM and "Happy Days." In Scottsdale, AZ she started acting at six-years-old in the play, "Gentlemen Jane," with her real life dad, Larry DeBaun,as the male lead. His father, Everett DeBaun, had been a screenwriter for television. In the late 1960s, Vicki was a publicity agent and rock groupie for The Doors. After attending LA Valley College, she became an accomplished actress, and stunt-doubler. She also wrote a book "Tara" about her travels in Europe and the people she met in Hollywood.

Vicki's roles mirrored her particular interest in comedy. Her roles included: "Checkered Flag," a small part in "Rocky III," and "Malibu Hot Summer" (an early Kevin Costner film, listed as a "b-movie classic"). She was also cast in "Survival Skills" and "Flying High" as a stewardess. She appeared in "The Dating Game," "Black Stallion," "Love Boat," "Lady in Red," and was involved in over 20 movies, television shows, and plays. She was a stunt double for Glenn Headly in the 1990 film adaptation of the classic comic, "Dick Tracy."

After her film career, Vicki moved to a ranch in Kingman, AZ where she raised her only daughter, Christina. In 2008 Vicki moved to Paradise with her daughter to support her step-mother, Marjorie Norvell Hilley and volunteered in the Paradise Lion's Club.

"Vicki was facetious, independent, honest, trustworthy, caring, dependable, sarcastic, smart, modest, stubborn, social, and loyal. She cared about others more than herself and always thought the world was better than it was. She held high standards. Vicki enjoyed tennis, swimming, yachting, skiing, and spoke conversational French. She preferred the beach, shopping, colors, outdoors, travel, culture, and sunshine. In music, she enjoyed soft rock. Loving to write, Vicki wrote long notes in birthday cards, letters, and also left notes around her home of her thoughts."

"Victoria Taft became spirit with us far too early in the devastating November 8, 2018 Camp Fire in Paradise, CA." Vicki leaves her daughter, Christina A. Taft of CA, and a brother, Donn L. Debaun of Sedona, AZ.P

Vicki's mother, Marian Taft, did some modeling in Los Angeles before moving to Oregon to a ranch and practicing business. Vicki would visit her mother in Oregon. Vicki's northeastern maternal grandparents were Jerome Bradford Taft, Vice President of an advertising agency, and Edith Baldwin.

Victoria "Vicki" Taft was the daughter of Marian Bradford (Jerome Bradford, Harry Jerome, Henry Spurr, Smith, Mijamin, Mijamin, Benjamin, Robert) Taft.

Source: Celebration of Life 12 Jan 2019 by Christina A. Taft

Paradise, CA

Paradise, CA is a town in Butte Co., CA, located about 10 miles East of Chico and 85 miles north of Sacramento, with a 2010 population of 26,218. The post office was established in 1877 and the town had a few different names: Leonards Mill, Poverty Ridge, and Pair-O-Dice. For many years the Butte County Railroad operated trains along the ridge serving the mines and sawmills. In Jun 2008 the Humboldt Fire destroyed over 22,800 acres between Chico and Paradise before it was brought under control. In Jul 2008 another Camp Fire burned on the north side of the town and thousands were forced to evacuate. Fortunately the fire did not cross the Feather River.

On 8 Nov 2018 a massive wildfire, called the Camp Fire, destroyed most of the town and much of three other communities. Shortly after the fire started, evacuations were called; however, many residents never heard the warning. According to the Deputy Fire Chief "the town center is completely on the ground. The south side as well as the north side has been hit very hard."

Eighty-six people died in the Camp Fire; tens of thousands were displaced and 18,804 buildings were lost. It was the deadliest and most destructive fire in California history and the deadliest in the US since the 1918 Cloquet fire. "After exhibiting extreme fire spread, fireline intensity, and spotting behaviors through the wilderness community of Concow, an urban firestorm formed in the densely populated foothill town of Paradise... it covered an area of 153, 336 acres (almost 240 sq miles)... with most of the damage occurring within the first four hours. Total damage was $16.5 billion dollars." It took 17 days to reach full containment.

Source: enwikipedia.org

Christina Taft in Paradise, CA after the devastating fire (source: www.cbc.ca)

Hollywood Tafts in the family

There are other Tafts who were involved in the Hollywood scene, like B. Y. Taft who was a very successful Hollywood developer and realtor along with his brother A. Z. who built the Taft Building at Hollywood and Vine Sts. (also descended in the Benjamin line). However we don't think there was another family so deeply defined as the DeBaun-Taft family in the film industry itself.

Left: Marian Bradford Taft, model

Below; Marian, Vicki and Christina

Right: Vicki and father Larry DeBaun during production of "Gentleman Jane." Larry was a cameraman and actor and his father, Everett DeBaun, was a screenwriter for television.

Vicki DeBaun And Father, Larry

Taft Family Association Officers

President: still searching
Vice President & Genealogist: now searching
Secretary/Treasurer: Pat Allen, 124 Meadow Ln, Greenfield, MA 01301; patmarkallen@gmail.com
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Annual dues of $8 per family are due and payable each year on or before June.
(Your dues are paid through the year on your mailing label.)